



**VIRGINIA WORKFORCE COUNCIL MEETING
MARCH 21, 2007 11:00 – 3:00 P.M.
Virginia Housing Development Authority
601 S. Belvidere Street
Richmond, Virginia 23220**

MINUTES

Call to Order – Chair Marjorie M. Connelly

Chair Connelly called the meeting to order

Roll Call – Jean Thomas-Banks, Administrative Assistant

Quorum confirmed.

Council Members Present:

Marjorie M. Connelly, Chair

Daniel LeBlanc, Senior Advisor to the Governor's Office for Workforce Development

Mark Dreyfus, Vice Chair

Huey Battle

Delegate Kathy Byron

Commissioner Dolores Esser

Richard Gonzalez

Secretary Patrick Gottschalk

James Leaman

Robert Leber

James McClain

Senator Yvonne Miller

Hiawatha Nicely, Jr.

Rita Ricks

Toney Rigali

Senator Frank M. Ruff, Jr.

Don Robin Sullenberger

Secretary Marilyn Tavenner

James Underwood

Brett Vassey

Andrea Wooten

Motion for Approval of the Minutes – Chair Connelly

The minutes of the October 31, 2007 meeting were approved.

New Virginia Workforce Council members were introduced and welcomed – Chair Connelly

1. Dr. Robert "Bob" Leber, Director of Education and Workforce Development at Northrop Grumman-Newport News
2. Linda T. Johnson, Mayor of Suffolk, Virginia

Meeting Dates – Paula Dehetre

June 25-26, 2007, Danville, Virginia, details to be determined.

Public Comment – Chair Connelly

Dr. Joe Ashley, Virginia Department of Rehabilitative Services (DRS) spoke on behalf of Commissioner Rothrock. Dr. Ashley offered three comments: (1) Acknowledged the leadership of the Virginia Employment Commission and Commissioner Dolores Esser in creating strategic partnerships with the Virginia Department of Rehabilitative Services that resulted in a grant from the Department of Labor in the amount of \$1.4 million dollars. This grant will support DRS disability program and navigator initiative; (2) Thanked Daniel LeBlanc and Paula Dehetre for allowing the agency to set-up in the lobby of the Council meeting a business display showing how accommodations and assistive technology can open up job opportunities for people with disabilities; and (3) Provided comments to the Council regarding a letter from Commissioner Rothrock to Daniel LeBlanc on the frontline staff certification process. DRS endorsed the certification process and the credentialing of staff that are located in One-Stop Centers.

Call for Council Representative to VATS – Chair Connelly

Chair acknowledged a request from Commissioner Jim Rothrock of the Virginia Department of Rehabilitative Services and opened the floor to volunteers to participate as a Council representative to the Virginia Assistive Technology System (VATS) Advisory Board. Senator Yvonne Miller tentatively agreed to serve on the VATS Advisory Council.

2007 General Assembly Wrap up – Chair Connelly

Kathy Thompson, Executive Policy Analyst and Megan Root, Executive Assistant provided an overview of the General Assembly bills the Governor's Office for Workforce Development (GOWD) followed throughout the 2007 legislative session. GOWD did not sponsor any bills during this session; rather it followed bills that related to state colleges, universities, community colleges, and public schools.

Virginia Workforce Council's Annual Report update – Chair Connelly

Kathy Thompson and Katherine DeRosear presented an outline and design of the proposed annual report that will cover the period of January 2007. The annual report will focus on the special incentives that were enacted during the report phase; the one-stop staff certification; the Advantage Virginia Incentive Program; the Local Incumbent Worker Training, the Workforce Training Programs Funding Summary; the Workforce Development Blue Print; the merger of the WIBs; and update on the Governor's Strategic Plan for Workforce Development. The design of the report will be simple but engaging while covering a large amount of information.

Chair Connelly acknowledged plans and design for annual report, and charged staff with inclusion of metrics and performance. Other Council members added suggestions that included Council Committees' such Performance and Availability lend assistance regarding incentive measures, Skills Committee regarding specific skill orientation, Workforce Development Committee regarding specific labor demands.

WIA Realignment Action Plan – Chair Connelly

Katherine DeRosear provided an overview of the discussion on how to best to realign the WIBs in Virginia; provided an overview of the guiding legislation and strategic plans that speak to the overall results of the system; and discussed how the WIBs can organize themselves to create a structure to carry out a workforce system that is demand-driven and has a regional focus. To accomplish the goal of realignment, a steering committee will be created to guide the process. The steering committee members will be a mixture of individuals who are familiar with workforce development, representatives from the private sector, educational institutions, and representatives from rural and urban communities. Katherine noted that the Council is currently taking nominations for individuals who might be interested in serving on the committee.

Workforce Development Strategic Plan Progress Report – Chair Connelly

Daniel LeBlanc, Senior Advisor, provided an overview of the strategic plan process; thanked those who participated in the development of the plan; and provided an update on the progress that has been made.

Gail Robinson, Deputy, provided a summary of the details related to the strategic plan focused on the three goals (demand-driven, accountability, and a data system to examine the outcomes of the goals); the approval of the plan by the Governor in December 2006; the development of the allocation task force; and the evaluation of the nine major workforce programs that will be done by the Upjohn Institute for employment Research. Gail also discussed the importance of the 2008 General Assembly in which the Governor will have the opportunity to address the entire issue of workforce development reform legislatively. In March, the Governor invited to Richmond the seven leading states that have successfully reformed workforce in their state. The states that attended were Michigan, Minnesota, Oregon, Texas, and Utah. Pennsylvania and Florida were not able to attend. The next steps include developing a resource sharing formula across the workforce training programs and the consolidation of the local workforce area. Specific to the Council, there is a need to develop clearer policy for the WIBs regarding their role and their strategic role in the workforce development system.

Governor's Office – Chair Connelly

The introduction of Bill Leighty, Chief of Staff to the Governor- Daniel LeBlanc

Mr. Bill Leighty discussed the Governor's plan to restructure workforce development in Virginia. Mr. Leighty emphasized the need to develop a workforce system that can address the needs of businesses and manufacturing in Virginia; he discussed the use of the Governor's Opportunity Fund and how it is being used as leverage to bring jobs to Virginia; he discussed the need for a centralized research and development policy office within the Governor's desire for a single-agency to administer workforce development. The Governor's agency of choice is the Virginia Community College System. Lastly, Mr. Leighty discussed the Governor's commitment to developing a workforce system that is performance management driven.

Demonstration of new Virginia Performs website – Chair Connelly

Nancy Roberts, Senior Advisor to the Council on Virginia's Future, presented to the VWC a presentation of the background of the Council; the Council membership; the roadmap for creating the Virginia's future website; the Virginia Performance Leadership Model; and an interactive display of the

Virginia Performs website (www.VAperforms.virginia.gov). The website provides information on the economy, education, health and family, geographic, mapping/GIS, comparisons of states, regional differences/similarities, demographic profiles of Virginia, workforce development and graduation rates across Virginia to name a few. Ms. Roberts invited everyone to examine the website by accessing the portals to gain information and/or to browse.

Update on governor's Commission on Health Care – Chair Connelly

Aryana Khalid, Assistant Secretary of Health and Human Resources provided a background on the Health Reform Commissions in the area of workforce development and an update on the JLAR study on self-sufficiency among social services clients. Ms. Khalid reiterated that the commission's focus is on healthcare workforce and careers in nursing, physicians and nursing support. The commission's targets to reform the healthcare system are: access to care and finding solutions for those without health insurance; aging and long-term care initiatives; quality, transparency, and prevention focused on Medicaid pay-for-performance and information transparency, prevention related to obesity, smoking and infant mortality; and expanding the health care workforce for physicians, nurses, and nursing support. Each of the target areas are meeting and developing recommendations that will be presented to the entire commission in May 2007. After receiving the recommendations from each workgroup, the commission will prioritize them and decide the ones that will be forwarded to the Governor. The Governor will then decide the recommendations he will include in his budget and legislative packet for the 2008 legislative session. In addition to the workgroup meeting, the commission had conducted three public hearings in early March 2007, one during the later part of March and three during the month of May 2007.

It was determined that there is a shortage of health professionals in each of the target groups and that the shortage will increase as baby-boomers retire. Ms. Khalid recommended that the Healthcare Commission work in conjunction with the Workforce Investment Boards (WIBs) to develop regional strategies to address the shortages through the one-stop delivery system.

One-Stop Assessment by the Urban Institute – Chair Connelly

Brian Davis, Senior Policy Analyst- Governor's Office for Workforce Development, provided a general overview of the findings and recommendations from the study conducted by the Urban Institute on the one-stop delivery system in Virginia. Brian will provide a more in-depth review of the report and findings at the June 2007 meeting. Brian noted that the study found that one-stops in Virginia have been successful in coordinating the core services, the self-directed services and the WIA program specific services. Most of the one-stop sites are customer friendly and conducive to the self-directed job searches; and the staff is (generally) accessible in these locations. The challenges that some one-stops are facing is bringing together the diverse partner services and resources. The study found that there is a low-level of full-time co-location of mandatory and optional partners in the one-stops across the state. In areas where the partners are involved, the study found the partners do not provide financial support to assist with the infrastructure to maintain the one-stop centers. The study did indicate that progress has been made in the areas of demand-planning and training of individuals based on demand occupations; however there has been less progress in the area of employer based training strategies. Additionally, progress continues to be lacking in the area of employer engagement in the public workforce system.

Recommendation for the study included providing additional technical assistance to the workforce boards to develop and expand incumbent worker training. The study noted that a few WIBs have taken advantage of the waiver that allows them to use 25% of their funds for incumbent worker

training. The second recommendation is the reduction, duplication and streamlining of services by encouraging better coordination between Wagner-Peyser and one-stop core and employer services in one-stops were the VA Employment Commission is not the one-stop center location. Another recommendation is to increase and redirect resources to encourage participation by the partner programs. The final recommendation is for the state to remove barriers for the co-location of partners at local one-stop centers. The study recommended that the state mandate each local partner provide a percentage of their funding for infrastructure funding and planning. Lastly, the study recommended revising the expectations of the state level MOU that is between the Secretaries of Commerce and Trade, Education, and Health and Human Resources.

One Stop Pilot Certification – Chair Connelly

Aida Pacheco, Program Administrator Specialist-Governor's Office for Workforce Development, provided an update on the co-location and integration of the one-stop system and provided the process for establishing a seamless delivery system. Ms. Pacheco noted that the process for establishing a seamless system partnership and collaborations across all levels of the delivery system. The responsibility for a new system rests with the state and WIBs to ensure that the system is coordinated and efficient. The process also includes the use of the best practices with the planning and implementation of the one-stop pilots. The pilots are Charlottesville, Norfolk, and the City of Emporia (and its surrounding counties). The pilot sites were selected because the leasing agreements they currently have will expire for both the VEC and DRS. Another component for selection included geographic areas and other operating elements. To address challenges presented, the Governor's Office for Workforce Development has scheduled two Workforce Summits, the first on February 1, 2007 and the second will be held on March 30, 2007, facilitated by the National center for Workforce Disabilities.

In addition to Ms. Pacheco's discussion, Tom Vozenilek, Senior Vice President, CB Ellis/Global Corporation Services and representatives from the Virginia Department of General Services, Real Estate Services Division discussed the challenges for accomplishing co-location of one-stop centers. A possible resolution to challenges is to examine the use of state agencies that are located throughout the state as portals for locating one-stops.

Committee Reports:

Executive Committee - Chair Connelly

Chair Connelly asked Brian Davis, Senior Policy Analyst-Governor's Office for Workforce Development to describe the criteria used to evaluate proposals for the request of the discretionary funds. Brian noted that the Council issued guidelines to provide a more focused deliberation for the review process and the use of the discretionary funds in 2006. In addition, Governor Kaine requested that the Senior Advisor for Workforce add criteria that include performance outcomes. The performance outcomes include a coordination with the local WIB and the One-Stop Center or a combination; the requestor must address skill upgrading; there must be a firm start and ending date; demonstrate that the request will be used as seed money with additional funding to match; and demonstrate that there are additional funds to support the program.

Workforce System Committee - Mark Dreyfus

Chair Mark Dreyfus reported that the committee meeting discussed demand-planning, infrastructure planning and virtual on-line one-stop. The committee will develop a framework for developing a demand-plan for local WIBs to present to the Council at the June 2007 meeting.

Skills Committee - Robin Sullenberger

Chair Robin Sullenberger reported that the Committee discussed developing a plan for the skill needs in Virginia. The committee made two actions. The committee agreed to recommend to VWC that the state seek a waiver from the U.S. Department of Labor to count the Career Readiness Certificate (CRC) as a credential for performance reporting purposes and committee acted to allow the Virginia Community College System to administer the CRC (data management and marketing) and the Virginia Skills Bank. The bank allows employers and job seekers to find each other without going through a third party. These items will be discussed in more detail at the June 2007 Council meeting.

One Stop Committee - Rita Ricks

Chair Rita Ricks reported that the committee will meet the first Tuesday of each month from 3:30 – 5:00p.m. The committee will also have a retreat on May 18, 2007. Chair Ricks provided a summary of the staff certification project. The pilot for the certification will begin on March 12, 2007 with the examination being held the week of June 14, 2007. The goal of the certification program is to test and certify 50 to 100 participants per quarter. In addition, Chair Ricks proposed to the Council that funding be made available to support the staff certification project in two ways: provide funds to support the training coordinators who will act as coach and motivator to assist employees while completing the credentialing process; and provide funds to give incentives to employees who complete their credentials with a certificate, plaque and/or community college credits.

The final item Chair Ricks reported on related to the credentialing of front line staff and whether it should be voluntary or mandatory. The Council advised Chair Ricks and her committee to cost out the options and report this information in the next meeting.

Performance and Accountability Committee -Huey Battle

Chair Huey Battle reported that the committee received a comprehensive report on the Virginia Workforce Network Information System (VWNIS) from staff at the Virginia Employment Commission. The committee also addressed the revision of the Council's Incentive Policies. The committee discussed two things they would like to accomplish with the policy: clarify the tenets of the policy and to revise how the Council prioritize and establish the weights assigned to each of the categories used to determine the incentives. The categories are exemplary performance, regional cooperation, local coordination, and most improved. The new policy will be posted on the council's website for public review and comments. The new policy will be presented to the Council at the June 2007 meeting.

Meeting adjourned – Chair Connelly

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 3:15 p.m.